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Chairman: Mr. Belinga-Eboutou ..... (Cameroon)

Contents

Agenda Item 108: Crime prevention and criminal justice

Agenda Item 109: International drug control

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 108: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/58/3, A/58/87-E/2003/82, A/58/125, A/58/131-S/2003/703, A/58/165, A/58/222 and A/58/223; A/C.3/58/L.3, L.4, L.5 and L.6)

Agenda item 109: International drug control (A/58/3, A/58/124, A/58/131-S/2003/703 and A/58/253)

1. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), introducing the two items, said transnational organized crime was a growing threat and was expanding into new areas such as human trafficking. Electronic technology enabled criminals to launder money, commit large-scale fraud and disseminate paedophile material, and had facilitated terrorism. His Office had developed an index of organized crime, combining data for more than 100 countries. Sub-Saharan Africa appeared to be the region most affected by organized crime, followed by Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. The countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Eastern Europe were countries of both origin and transit for human trafficking, with the industrialized world being the primary destination. There was a real risk of a "criminal divide": the developing world was experiencing high and increasing levels of crime, while the developed countries showed stable or declining levels. The data suggested a clear link between the failure of some countries to achieve sustainable development and the growth of organized crime; World Bank studies on the comparative causes of violent crime, for example, showed a strong correlation between crime and high levels of inequality.

2. Turning to the use and production of illicit drugs, he said there had been a sizeable reduction in opium and coca cultivation in Asia and the Andean countries, with Colombia and Afghanistan the principal remaining sources of those drugs. In the Golden Triangle area, if recent achievements were sustained, a 100-year effort to control drug production would come to an end. In Colombia as well, there had been a sustained reduction of coca cultivation during the previous two years. In Afghanistan, however, opium farmers and traffickers had earned about $2.5 billion in 2002, about half the country's gross domestic product.

3. While there had been a reduction in cocaine and heroin abuse in some major North American and Western Europe markets, new markets had emerged in Eastern European States, the Russian Federation and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and China. Furthermore, drug abuse increased the threat of a major health pandemic in HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne diseases. Developing countries, particularly in Africa, were forced to devote scarce resources to curbing cannabis cultivation, trafficking and abuse and the lenient policies of some countries with regard to cannabis were therefore all the more disheartening. The United Nations Ecstasy and Amphetamine Global Survey 2003 had shown that synthetic drugs, such as amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), could become the world's most serious drug problem.

4. A number of steps had been taken to deal with the changing crime and drug situation. He welcomed the entry into force on 29 September 2003 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which provided a new framework for international cooperation, and, noting that most of the signatories were developing countries, called on all countries which had not done so, in particular the developed countries, to ratify the Convention. He recalled that the General Assembly, upon the recommendation of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, had supported his Office's work to fight terrorism and he welcomed the Commission's proposal to convene a high-level segment of the Eleventh Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as well as the recent successful conclusion of negotiations on the draft United Nation Nations Convention against Corruption and called on Member States to give their full support to its adoption.

5. The ministerial meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had reconfirmed the importance of demand reduction in the context of an integrated and balanced approach. Significant challenges lay ahead and issues such as poverty, disasters, HIV/AIDS and drugs all contributed to human suffering, interfered with conflict resolution and hindered development, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Existing instruments on drugs, organized crime, terrorism and, soon, corruption, must be accompanied by concrete actions to reduce drug abuse and treat drug users.

6. The Office on Drugs and Crime had accumulated a body of knowledge, expertise and best practices. Earlier in 2003, the Office had been reorganized with a view to delivering better-quality programmes and

improving value for money. For example, for the first time, a consolidated budget for 2004-2005 had been presented which integrated drugs, crime, terrorism and resource requirements into a single operational context and included an in-depth review of the Office's performance in 2002-2003. Research and analysis and field operations had been strengthened and programmes relating to legislative assistance, transnational organized crime, human trafficking, corruption, terrorism and money-laundering were being implemented by small teams of experts in priority areas. In that context, he thanked countries which had made voluntary contributions to those programmes.

7. The relevance of his Office in future years would be measured by its ability to meet the demands of Member States for new legal instruments and policies; research and analysis; and field-based operations for capacity-building and implementing conventions. Given the Office's modest resources, it must build strategic partnerships, and he noted, for example, the development of a joint programme with the World Bank targeting a dozen countries where drugs and crime issues affected the Bank's activities.

8. In addition, he recalled the Paris Pact adopted in May 2003 with regard to drug- and crime-related problems along trafficking routes between Central Asia and Europe and the June session of the Security Council on Afghanistan and that country's drug and crime problems. He noted the strong commitment of the Commonwealth of Independent States to counter the international dimension of Afghanistan's drug problems. Furthermore, his Office's relationship with the Counter-Terrorism Committee continued to grow. Cooperation with the private sector was also being reinforced, as for example in an innovative pilot programme in Mexico to combat kidnapping, co-financed by the corporate sector, the Government and the Office on Drugs and Crime. That successful model could be implemented in other countries where kidnapping was common.

9. The goal of sustainable development required not only fair and efficient sharing of the resources of the planet but also the creation of an environment of human security and a life free from fear of "uncivil behaviour". Fighting the threats of terrorism, violence, crime and drug abuse required vision, political determination and resources. Despite its limited resources, his Office would continue to work in the most effective manner possible to meet the needs of Member States and he therefore called on Member States to support his Office in its work.

10. **Mr. Spatafora** (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Union, agreed that there must be a common response to the challenges facing the international community. He noted with interest the index of organized crime developed by the Office on Drugs and Crime and, given the very different situations in areas such as sub-Saharan Africa, Afghanistan and the economies in transition of East Europe, wondered if the Executive Director had any suggestions on how to address those very different socio-economic and geopolitical situations in general and, in particular, how to improve the effectiveness of cooperation between his Office and the European Commission.

11. **Mr. Stelzer** (Austria) said the relatively bleak picture painted by the Executive Director highlighted the need for focused action and increased cooperation, and he welcomed the new partnerships developed with the World Bank and the Counter-Terrorism Committee on such issues as drugs and terrorism, which had an immediate effect on populations and society. He wondered whether the Office could likewise reach out to new partners in civil society in order to increase awareness of the drug problem and thereby increase public support for government action.

12. **Mr. Andrabi** (Pakistan) felt that, despite concerns about the situation in Afghanistan, there were encouraging trends, such as the reduction in drug production in the Golden Triangle, and asked for more information in that regard. He also requested more information on the results of the Office's demand-reduction strategy in the field and its potential for addressing the issue of trafficking, as well as on the very encouraging trend towards increased partnerships, in particular with the private sector.

13. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) requested more information on concrete action which could be taken to address the problem of organized crime and urban violence in Africa, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, as well as programmes to encourage farmers in Asia, specifically Afghanistan, to cultivate alternative crops.

14. **Ms. Ahmed** (Sudan) enquired as to what could be done to provide further assistance to African countries, where lack of resources and policy weaknesses were major problems. She welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on Transnational

Organized Crime and noted the support of developing countries for that instrument.

15. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), in response to the representative of Italy, said that his Office's index on organized crime showed that, whereas in the past the Southern countries had mainly been producers of drugs for the richer Northern countries, the drug problem had become more generalized and must therefore be addressed in a cooperative way, taking into account regional specificities. The problems of the poorer countries in Africa could be addressed by increased funding from donors, whereas the problems of the middle-income Eastern European countries could be addressed by funding at the regional level. There was promising work under way in the European Union but additional funding was needed, and he called on the Italian presidency of the European Union to address that issue.

16. In response to the representative of Austria, he said that his Office must strengthen its partnerships and serve as a catalyst for the most effective use of available resources. He noted that 90 per cent of his Office's budget was provided by some 20 donors, with the remaining 10 per cent coming from the United Nations regular budget, and welcomed cooperative efforts with middle-income States such as the Russian Federation, Brazil and Mexico to supplement those resources. Cooperation with the private sector, for example the efforts to combat kidnapping in Mexico, was an additional source of potential resources. Civil society was also an as yet untapped resource; in many countries people were ready to volunteer or work for relatively little pay to assist the Office in its work. Such efforts to complement and supplement the resources of his Office must be strengthened.

17. Replying to a question from the representative of Pakistan, he said production would increase as long as demand existed; when one drug disappeared another emerged to take its place. Opium production in the Golden Triangle was expected to be eradicated by 2006-2007, while in the Lao People's Democratic Republic production was being reduced by 20 per cent annually. Although opium production in eastern Myanmar was rapidly decreasing, that country was becoming a major source of synthetic drugs, for which there was no therapy. The only solution, therefore, was more effective worldwide prevention. On the subject of sub-Saharan Africa as a hotbed of organized crime in addition to urban crime, a great deal of cocaine originating in Colombia found its way via the United States to Africa, an innocent and convenient transit area, as did heroin and opium from the East, and when sold domestically caused addiction.

18. UNODC would shortly be publishing an opium survey conducted in Afghanistan, but the prospects were gloomy. The problem was that in the opium economy the risk/reward balance was skewed, with mammoth rewards and minuscule risks to traffickers, owing to the low level of law enforcement. Income from cultivation and domestic trafficking alone amounted to 50 per cent of the country's gross national product. One possible remedy was to augment the risk by establishing additional interdictions; another was to provide poor farmers with assistance, without which they would not halt opium cultivation. An alternative-development project was urgently called for.

19. Regarding the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which had just entered into force, he could not explain why it had been ratified mostly by developing countries, but it had indeed been ratified by only one North American and three European countries. Perhaps the tardiness of other signatories stemmed not from any reservations on their part but from the fact that, taking the Convention seriously, they were embarked on the necessary but time-consuming process of liaison between the executive and legislative branches. In any event, he urged all countries to ratify the Convention as rapidly as possible.

20. **The Chairman** invited the Under-Secretary for Global Affairs and Human Rights of Mexico to address the Committee.

21. **Ms. Olamendi Olavarrieta** (Mexico), congratulating UNODC, and particularly its Executive Director, on the work accomplished, said it was important to share with the Committee that work, as well as the five-year review of progress in implementing the 1998 Political Declaration of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem. She applauded the fact that most countries saw shared responsibility in drug matters as their main task, since producing countries had also become consumers and vice versa. Furthermore, the time was ripe for the Committee to discuss abolishing the concept of donor and receiving countries, for everyone had something to give to and

receive from the Committee. There persisted a view of donors as "good" countries and recipients as less good, but it was the concept of shared responsibility that was crucial, and Mexico would continue to be both donor and recipient. While most countries had programmes for fighting crime and drug trafficking, they also focused on prevention and the treatment of addicts. The more time and energy spent on fighting crime, the less could be devoted to addicts. There, too, responsibility should be shared, as highlighted in the Joint Ministerial Statement of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (A/58/124).

22. An ideal instrument for combating drug trafficking and organized crime was the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, but only if ratified by all States, as emphasized at the ministerial segment of the Commission's session. Another valuable tool would be the new United Nations Convention against Corruption, since, corruption of government officials was the main cause of the escalation of organized crime, including the impunity with which drug barons brought enormous quantities of narcotics into most countries.

23. Another pertinent issue was whether or not certain drugs should be legalized. It was highly significant that although the Ministers had reiterated their commitment to address that issue, they claimed that they were reluctant to do so for reasons relating to the health of their populations. Since addiction, especially to synthetic drugs, was on the increase, authorities must fulfil their commitment to monitor the manufacture and transport of chemical precursors as a prerequisite for curbing the manufacture and distribution of synthetic drugs. Delegations should support the Joint Ministerial Statement, which warranted serious consideration in efforts to combat organized crime, especially drug trafficking. Unless all parties redoubled their efforts in a spirit of cooperation, they would not be equal to the task of fighting the production, transport and distribution of drugs. Mexico had embarked on that route and hoped to help build the drug-free world to which all present aspired.

24. **Mr. Balarezo** (Peru), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Rio Group subscribed entirely to the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly and of the round-table discussion held during the ministerial segment of the session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Also, the Secretary-General's report on the quinquennial evaluation of the outcome of the special session (A/58/253) enabled the Committee to follow the progress of the countries of the Group in their fight against drugs and the measures taken to combat the drug trade. Alarmed at the rapid increase in the illegal production of certain types of drugs in some regions, the Rio Group also realized that, in the Group's region as elsewhere, much remained to be done to fulfil the 1998 commitments.

25. Drugs endangered health, security and well-being, especially those of children and youth, undermined efforts to reduce poverty, and caused violence and crime, while the vast resources of the illicit drug economy reinforced criminal organizations, including terrorist groups, and increased the availability of instruments of war, some of which were recycled from past armed conflicts. The most affected countries' measures to combat drug trafficking, money-laundering and illicit arms traffic were of no avail in the absence of tangible results from both international and national efforts in the interest of peace and global security. Alas, despite recognition of the principle of shared responsibility in fighting drugs, the persisting imbalance in which a handful of nations assumed the cost of the struggle, while drug production and use were tolerated in others, further undermined international efforts and violated existing international provisions.

26. The countries of the Rio Group reaffirmed their intention to apply national and international strategies — such as education and training — for demand and supply reduction and for adherence to the principle of shared responsibility, subject to respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-intervention in internal affairs. Convinced that illicit drug cultivation jeopardized States' economic development and the prosperity of their peoples, the Group assigned high priority to its eradication. That called for sound international cooperation, alternative development and access to markets. In that regard, he commended the technical cooperation provided by UNODC and called for a greater financial commitment on the part of developed countries, international financial institutions, regional development banks and non-governmental organizations.

27. The Group urged UNODC to continue its support to transit States through new technical-assistance programmes on data collection, equipment for advanced operations, and consideration of projects for

cross-border and regional cooperation and alternative development. He recommended that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should be given greater decision-making power and continue to broker consultations among Member States on all matters linked to the world drug problem. The Group would continue to encourage cooperation within the region and outside it, and with regional bodies, without discrimination, to promote coordinated action in all areas, including the participation of civil society, to help the developing countries combat the global drug problem in all its manifestations.

28. **Ms. Cornacchia** (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and, in addition, Iceland and Norway, acknowledged the United Nations pivotal role in developing strategies for fighting all forms of crime and protecting freedom and security. In that connection, she commended the work of the pertinent United Nations bodies strengthening national crime-prevention and criminal-justice systems. The European Union firmly supported UNODC's activities, especially its development of universal legal instruments and provision of technical cooperation to developing countries and those in transition, as attested to by the extent of complementarity between that Office and the European Union.

29. New impetus must be given to the fight against organized crime, which undermined the rule of law. She welcomed the recent entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which, together with its three protocols, was the key international instrument for combating the phenomenon, as well as the planned entry into force by the end of 2003 of its protocol on trafficking in human beings. The European Union looked forward to active participation in the preparation of the rules of procedure and in the first Conference of the Parties, in June 2004. She urged countries to accelerate ratification of the Convention and the protocols so that a maximum of signatories could attend the Conference, and praised UNODC for its technical support and legal assistance to Member States in that regard.

30. The next crucial step would be the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which would contain, in additional to legal provisions, measures to prevent corruption, a phenomenon that caused reduced investment or even disinvestment and had the greatest impact on the most destitute — and hence most vulnerable — social strata. Sustainable anti-corruption solutions and a comprehensive, balanced network of effective measures could only be achieved through prevention, criminalization, international cooperation, and monitoring and refund mechanisms. An active member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Negotiation of the Convention, the European Union welcomed the fact that the new legal instrument would be open for signature by the end of 2003, and Mexico's offer to host a high-level conference for the signing of the Convention.

31. She applauded the strengthened UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch and the 2002 launch of the Global Programme against Terrorism, which complemented the activities of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council by guiding Member States through legislation and implementation of the relevant international instruments, which it had already done in over 30 countries in 2003. UNODC's reorganization would strengthen its effectiveness, optimizing resource allocation as approved by the competent commissions. She also called for further strengthening of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, as requested in General Assembly resolutions.

32. Turning to international drug control, he welcomed the opportunity afforded by the recent Joint Ministerial Statement of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for Member States to undertake a midterm review of their progress in implementing the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Not only should the drug problem be tackled on the basis of shared responsibility; other essential tools were data collection and analysis, and evaluation of the results of drug-control policies. Production and trafficking being directly linked to demand, all efforts should focus on a balanced approach, as stressed by the European Union in the Commission.

33. The alarming growth of illicit production and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including amphetamines, posed new challenges for supply reduction and international law-enforcement cooperation. The increasing recreational use of such substances by young people was alarming and needed to be tackled through consistent school-based

prevention programmes with family and local-community involvement. The report of the Executive Director of UNODC on synthetic drugs constituted an authoritative warning that due consideration must be given to possible ways of fighting that new threat. The European Union was concerned by the continuing links between drug trafficking and terrorism and other national and transnational criminal activities.

34. The European Union supported another focus of the Commission, namely the need to encourage crop substitution by poppy and coca growers, and urged States and UNODC to intensify their efforts, especially in Afghanistan. Illicit production of drug crops could be reduced by alternative development, thereby improving the quality of life of target populations. She encouraged the relevant United Nations agencies to mainstream drug-control issues into their programmes. Training, technical assistance, coordination and information exchange among States were the priorities of effective cooperation, based on a policy mix that included prevention, law enforcement, risk reduction, treatment and reintegration of drug users, and alternative development.

35. Since it was vital that UNODC must continue to play a primary role in global coordination of counter-narcotics activity, the European Union recommended that a sufficient share of the regular budget should be allocated to its programme to enable it to fulfil its mandates. Given the European Union's efforts in that field — particularly its Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Drugs — it looked forward to further cooperation with the Office.

36. **Mr. Duque Estrada Meyer** (Brazil) said that Brazil welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and would ratify it in the near future. It was also encouraged that the negotiations concerning a Convention against Corruption would soon be concluded, as corruption was a serious impediment to social development.

37. Since trafficking in human beings clearly had a transnational dimension, international cooperation to create mechanisms to combat that scourge was more important than ever. Coordination between public and civil-society initiatives was also needed.

38. His delegation reaffirmed its support for a multilateral approach to the problems of illicit drug consumption and trafficking and related crimes. Brazil had devised a national anti-drug policy which took into consideration both demand and supply. Drug-related problems also had an international dimension, since production and consumption were interrelated. Brazil had ratified the main international treaties in that area and had established regional and bilateral cooperation that recognized the need for shared responsibility in the control of illicit drug trafficking. That cooperation would also aid in the fight against corruption.

39. **Mr. Cumberbatch Miguén** (Cuba) said that the problem of illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking continued to grow despite national and international efforts. International cooperation should be based on respect for international law and the Charter, especially the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and renunciation of the threat and use of force.

40. Cuba had demonstrated its willingness to prevent drug trafficking in its territory and had implemented strong measures against its use as a natural route towards the United States of America, which was a huge centre of drug consumption. It had repeatedly expressed its willingness to cooperate with the United States authorities to fight drug trafficking, and had imposed no conditions related to the blockade on that cooperation, yet its proposals had been rejected repeatedly.

41. His delegation commended the work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, as well as that of the International Narcotics Control Board as the only independent authority with international scope to provide an objective assessment of States' efforts to consolidate a world drug-control policy and develop effective international cooperation. Cuba had strengthened its exchanges with both institutions, which had led to enhanced training and technical support for its personnel. It would continue to contribute its available resources to combat drugs in the Caribbean region. Criminal legislation in that area had been strengthened and measures against money-laundering enforced.

42. *Mr. Maertens (Belgium), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

43. **Mr. Xie** Bohua (China) said that, in implementing the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the parties should respect the principles of sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit. Regional and global cooperation mechanisms should be established, and

assistance to developing countries increased to build their capacity to prevent and combat transnational organized crime.

44. China had been an active participant in the drafting of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, now awaiting adoption, and appealed to all countries to strengthen their efforts to allow the Convention to play its proper role. His Government had taken a comprehensive approach to the problem: while meting out severe punishment for corruption, it was building a fair, transparent, clean and efficient government. While adopting measures based on its own specific conditions, it would continue to participate in exchanges and cooperation with other nations, regions and international organizations.

45. Counter-terrorism had become a key part of crime prevention, and China had become party to 10 international conventions in that area. It supported the strengthening of cooperation against terrorism under the coordination of the Security Council.

46. **Mr. Musambachime** (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that, at the ministerial segment of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Ministers and government representatives had emphasized that the world drug problem must be addressed in multilateral, bilateral, regional and national settings, supported by strong international development cooperation according to the principle of shared responsibility. Continued financial and technical support remained imperative. Five years after the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, the drug problem was still a global challenge, and efforts to attain the goals set must be enhanced.

47. SADC welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which provided the international community with the means to respond to the increasing globalization of organized crime. It also welcomed the consensus reached on the text of the draft Convention against Corruption, and hoped that it could be adopted without delay. There was a growing awareness that combating corruption was integral to Governments' efforts to achieve effectiveness, fairness and efficiency. SADC also welcomed the involvement of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the international campaign against terrorism.

48. Within the SADC member countries, drug abuse and trafficking remained a matter of grave concern. It jeopardized the development of human capital and compromised economic development because of its destabilizing effects on the State, the economy and civil society. Drug trafficking attracted inflows of illicit profits that contributed to overvalued exchange rates, income inequality and money-laundering. It had also led to an increase in related crime, affecting not just the economy but also the social fabric of those countries.

49. In response to the situation, SADC countries had demonstrated high-level political involvement in campaigns against drug trafficking and abuse, and had improved capacity-building and coordination in drug control. Members had developed national drug-control strategies, which were in the process of implementation, in partnership with non-governmental organizations.

50. Despite extensive efforts to combat crime and drug abuse within SADC, those efforts were not sufficient. As developing countries, its members were confronted with many development problems, including the lack of financial resources. They therefore needed technical assistance and funding in their efforts to fight drug trafficking and abuse and to improve crime prevention and criminal justice.

51. **Mr. Siv** (United States of America) said that drugs and crime threatened all countries, irrespective of economic and demographic conditions. Therefore, support for law-enforcement institutions must be mainstreamed into overall efforts to achieve sustainable development. In many cases, for instance Afghanistan, those institutions must be created from scratch. His Government was optimistic that there was a growing international appreciation for the link between development and law enforcement: corruption and lack of law enforcement hindered socio-economic development, and it was therefore committed to treating law-enforcement assistance as development assistance.

52. Another dangerous global trend was the increased involvement of organized crime with trafficking in persons. Like other forms of transnational organized crime, trafficking in persons had critical implications for regional and national stability and threatened the rule of law, democracy and economic prosperity. The damage inflicted by trafficking extended beyond the victims and their families, however. Terrorists were

increasingly relying on the resources of organized crime to finance their operations, and they were drawn to the profits generated and the infrastructure established by traffickers, such as document forgers, corrupt border police, money-laundering and access to weapons.

53. Although such issues had not always been considered among foreign-policy priorities of many Governments, the past several years had seen successful international anti-drug and crime efforts, and strong cross-border and regional collaboration was closing in on the human traffickers as well. The conclusion of negotiations on the Convention against Corruption and the entry into force of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime were landmark achievements in the efforts to develop a global infrastructure against crime and corruption. His Government was reviewing the latter Convention and hoped to ratify it in the near future.

54. The application of those new legal instruments would provide Governments with additional tools against transnational threats, but resources, personnel and political capital would need to be devoted towards fulfilling those obligations. His Government would continue to support its international partners in that endeavour.

55. **Ms. Khalil** (Egypt) said that, in September 2003, Egypt had hosted a conference of ministers of justice of French-speaking countries, held in conjunction with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Francophone Organization, the aim being to promote ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols. The Declaration and report of the conference would be circulated at the current session of the General Assembly. She hoped for additions to the number of recent signatories to the Convention, which was evidence of the determination of the international community to counter crime wherever it occurred. She also welcomed its recent entry into force and the impending entry into force of two of its protocols. She welcomed the Joint Ministerial Statement issued following the ministerial segment of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as well as the international efforts to implement the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction. She was concerned, however, that the lenient attitudes to illegal drug-taking in some parts of the world would hamper such efforts, the importance of which had been emphasized by the Commission and in the Joint Ministerial Statement. She underscored the ministerial recommendation concerning national drug-control strategies and the measures proposed with a view to achieving a significant reduction of drug abuse by 2008.

56. Despite the international, regional and local efforts to combat illicit use and trafficking, the drug problem persisted, posing both a challenge and an obstacle to development. She reiterated the need to tackle the underlying causes, such as unemployment, violence and, specifically, poverty. She also called for further international cooperation to eliminate the problem, with particular focus on assistance to the developing countries affected by it, not least in view of its adverse transboundary repercussions on the economic, social, health and moral fronts.

57. **Ms. Boiko** (Ukraine) said that the Tenth Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders had called upon the international community to take concerted action to address the challenges posed by transnational crime. As a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Ukraine would welcome technical assistance from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to adapt national legislation to the provisions of the Convention and its protocols.

58. Ukraine welcomed the consensus reached by the members of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of a Convention against Corruption, which was a truly global response to a worldwide problem. Combating corruption was one of the country's priorities, and substantial efforts had been made to improve its capacity to fight crime and corruption, which had led to a significant reduction in the level of corruption.

59. International terrorism had now become a part of transnational crime and, in order to implement the Security Council resolutions, Ukraine had put in place measures to prevent the use of its territory by international terrorist organizations.

60. The problem of human trafficking was another challenge to human security. Over the past decade, thousands of young Ukrainian women had been trafficked in different parts of the world, and legislation had been adopted to intensify the fight against that crime. Ukraine urged States and relevant international organizations to develop national, regional and international strategies to complement the

work of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme.

61. Drug trafficking continued to pose a serious threat to public health and national security, while drug addiction, HIV/AIDS, and the use by organized crime and terrorist groups of the proceeds of opium trafficking had the potential to destabilize the whole region. Ukraine had become a major transit point for international drug trafficking, owing to its location, a developed transportation network, and many underused chemical companies that could potentially be used by criminals. The State was endeavouring to remedy the situation and accorded great importance to international cooperation. In that respect, a protocol on cooperation to combat drug and arms trafficking had been signed with the neighbouring Republic of Moldova, and agreement had been reached on the establishment of a virtual law-enforcement centre and inter-State information analysis system for the GUUAM Group (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova).

62. **Mr. Swe** (Myanmar) said that recent reports showed that significant progress had been made by States in reducing the cultivation of illicit crops through a balanced programme of eradication, alternative development and law enforcement. It was essential that international cooperation should be made available to encourage alternative development in order to ensure that such cultivation was not merely relocated to other areas.

63. Myanmar had made significant progress in its efforts to eradicate opium-poppy cultivation and had initiated a plan to eradicate narcotic drugs by 2014. There had been a 70 per cent decline in opium production over the past 10 years, owing to the Government's political commitment, which had been translated into concrete action, including crop-substitution programmes, new roads, expanded energy and electricity supply, and the development of new markets to provide alternative sources of income for poppy growers. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was collaborating with such efforts and Myanmar greatly appreciated the support of the United Nations, donor countries and neighbours in its fight to control the production of narcotic drugs. In that respect, Myanmar had concluded bilateral cooperation agreements with Bangladesh, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines, the Russia Federation, Thailand and Viet Nam.

64. A campaign was also being waged against the emerging threat posed by amphetamine-type stimulants and, since 1999, Myanmar had seized sizeable quantities of precursors, in collaboration with neighbouring countries, including China, India and Thailand. In the fight against narcotic drugs, sustained national, regional and international efforts were needed.

65. **Ms. Ito** (Japan) said that Japan was taking steps to ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime at the earliest possible date. It had also signed the three protocols, and considered the practice of trafficking in persons to be among the most serious of crimes. It had made every effort to combat that crime by strengthening law enforcement, enhancing regional and international cooperation and providing assistance to victims.

66. Japan had taken an active part in deliberations on the draft United Nations Convention against Corruption, and welcomed its completion. It would proceed to take the necessary legislative steps to sign and ratify the Convention.

67. With regard to international drug control, Japan had renewed its five-year strategy to strengthen domestic measures and promote international cooperation. It was deeply concerned by the increasing illicit production and trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants in north-east Asia. The ease of their production and trafficking contributed to the rapid spread of their use, particularly among young people, and Japan believed that those substances would present the single most serious drug problem in the world in the coming years. Since they were mostly smuggled into the country by sea, international cooperation and strengthening border controls were essential. Japan therefore welcomed the recent activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotics Control Board, which underscored the problem of amphetamine-type stimulants.

68. Lastly, Japan reaffirmed its commitment to international cooperation to free the world from the threat of crime and drugs.

69. **Mr. Ivanou** (Belarus), speaking also on behalf of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan, said that the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should help further the development of relevant

legal standards and strengthen international cooperation to combat the most dangerous forms of criminal activity threatening the social and economic development of every nation.

70. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, under its current Executive Director, was now increasingly focusing on priority issues such as the provision of technical assistance to States in crime prevention and criminal-justice reform. The entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provided the international community with an appropriate legislative mechanism to combat that scourge. It was to be hoped that the draft United Nations Convention against Corruption would also be presented for adoption at the earliest opportunity.

71. Crucially, at the regional level, various joint initiatives had been launched to combat terrorism, drug trafficking, illicit migration and smuggling under the Inter-State Programme of Joint Measures to Combat Crime for the Period 2003-2004 and the Programme of the Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for Combating International Terrorism and Other Manifestations of Extremism to the Year 2004. CIS countries were also working to further refine a database for strengthening cooperation on counter-terrorism within the Commonwealth, currently containing 400,000 entries. A joint working group was also operating successfully in the area of situation analysis and information exchange.

72. Significant progress had also been achieved within the CIS in broadening the legal basis for cooperation between law-enforcement agencies. Successful cooperation was also under way to combat illicit migration and crime on board vehicular transport.

73. The countries on whose behalf he spoke were committed to promoting expansion of cooperation among relevant CIS agencies and between CIS countries and the United Nations and other international organizations.

74. **Mr. Zeidan** (Lebanon) said that, in order to prevent crime, it was necessary to tackle the causes and, above all, to reduce the risk of crime by identifying high-risk areas. In Lebanon, legislators, aware of the need to combat corruption and money-laundering, had included the offence of corruption in the Penal Code. Likewise, enrichment resulting from corruption, influence-trafficking or abuse of power was now a criminal offence and assets could be seized, as bank secrecy was no longer applicable in such cases.

75. Following the measures that the Government had taken against money-laundering and related problems, the Financial Action Task Force of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had struck Lebanon off the list of "Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories".

76. Lebanon particularly appreciated the technical-assistance programmes offered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. They had enabled it to improve the capabilities of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, and to increase public awareness about corruption. New goals had been established, in particular that of raising awareness among youth. While the opportunities for corruption had increased, the means of detecting it had also increased; thus, because the phenomenon had become more visible, society appeared to be more corrupt. The fight against corruption must continue, based on the principle that every act of corruption involved both parties.

77. States bore the principal responsibility for crime prevention and control; but international cooperation was essential to help society respond to the challenges.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.